

Frequently Asked Questions - Biomass Energy Grant Request for Proposals

Question #1: Who is eligible for funding?

Answer #1: Non-profit and public organizations are eligible to submit proposals. A public organization may include local, state, and federal government agencies, K-12 schools, and community colleges, colleges and universities. A non-profit organization refers to an organization that is exempted by statute or organizations granted exemption from Federal Income Tax under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4). Such non-profit organizations include (but are not limited to) service organizations, arts organizations, parks and recreational organizations, churches, professional associations, and non-public schools, colleges and universities. For-profit entities are ineligible but may partner with an eligible applicant. Projects must be located in Michigan.

Question #2: How many grants will be awarded?

Answer #2: We do not know how many awards will be made at this time. That will be dependent on the number of proposals received and subsequent evaluation process. Based on past solicitations, we anticipate that between 3 and 5 grants will be awarded.

Question #3: What can be considered as match?

Answer #3: Match can be either cash and/or in-kind that is provided by the applicant, project partner(s), or subcontractor(s). It cannot come from another federal funding source.

Question #4: Can I still apply for the grant if the project has already begun?

Answer #4: Refer to Section I-F in the RFP, "The State of Michigan is not liable for any cost incurred by an applicant prior to issuance of a grant agreement." Also, as stated in I-D, the projects must be completed within 12 months of award.

Question #5: Will my project be considered for funding?

Answer #5: We can not comment on specific project ideas. Since this is a competitive process, all projects that meet eligibility requirements will be reviewed and scored by a committee. We recommend reading the RFP thoroughly and determining if your project fits the RFP's objectives, requirements, and tasks.

Question #6: Since the RFP is not for public release, can I provide a copy to a potential partner on the project?

Answer #6: This can be shared with a potential partner of a project. The RFP is only available upon request because we are directed by the source of our funds, to provide clarifications of the RFP that arise to all recipients of the RFP. The assumption would be that partners would share any clarifications with one another.

Question #7: Does Section II-O that states "No member of the Legislature or Judiciary of the State of Michigan or any individual employed by the State shall be permitted to share in this Agreement, or any benefit that arises from this Agreement", refer to state university personnel not being able to include a salary component in the budget?

Answer #7: That section of the RFP pertains to State of Michigan employees, not state university employees. For instance, I couldn't be hired to work on part of your grant. There can be a salary component for the project manager and/or student workers as part of the budget. As stated in the RFP, that needs to be shown by hourly wage and number of hours that will be worked.

Question #8: The RFP states that construction costs are not eligible to be funded under this grant but does this include purchase/installation of a biomass boiler?

Answer #8: Construction costs generally include things such as actual construction of buildings, roads, water/sewage lines, etc. A boiler could probably be classified as a piece of equipment within a project.

Question #9: Does this RFP fund installing equipment, such as a burner or boiler, into a residential or commercial building?

Answer #9: The purpose of this grant solicitation is to fund projects that deploy/enhance performance of fully commercialized technologies through innovative applications, demonstrations, marketing and technical assistance, feasibility studies, etc. Only non-profit and public organizations are eligible applicants (which would include other state agencies). It is a competitive process and generally, we are seeking projects that fully deploy a biomass technology and would be more involved than just purchasing a piece of equipment for a building.

Question #10: Can you use this grant to funds projects such as adding piping or water lines to a facility?

Answer #10: As stated in the RFP, construction projects/costs are not eligible for funding.

Question #11: Can this grant be used to fund the installation of a corn burner in a residential location?

Answer # 11: See applicant eligibility in Answer #1 above. Also, see the response to Question #7 above with respect to fundable project types and program objectives.

Question # 12: Is a project that advances existing commercial technology, but proposes to use an alternative feedstock to produce biofuels/bioenergy, be eligible for funding under this solicitation?

Answer #12: Under a competitive solicitation, we are unable to comment on specific proposals. In general, if a proposer can show that an alternative feedstock has been a proven substitute for a conventional feedstock elsewhere (methodology and outcomes are published and replicable) and the conversion technology is fully commercialized and being used in the marketplace, this would seem to fit the requirement for a demonstration of commercial technology. If not, this would not fit this solicitation.

Question #13: Is there a target proposal length, and is there a page limit?

Answer #13: The RFP does not have language pertaining to the length of a proposal. The language does speak in section I-M about economy of preparation and Part V discusses the format in which grant proposals must be submitted.